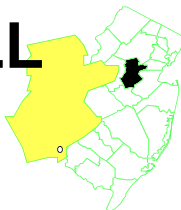


ROCKY HILL MUNICIPAL WELL NEW JERSEY

EPA ID# NJD980654156



EPA REGION 2
CONGRESSIONAL DIST. 12
Somerset County
Rocky Hill Borough

Site Description

The Rocky Hill Municipal Well Site (Site) covers 2 acres in the southern part of Somerset County and consists of two wells that were constructed in 1936 to supply the residents of the Borough of Rocky Hill with a source of drinking water. In 1978, the first well was sealed and abandoned because it was contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs), in particular trichloroethylene (TCE). The second well continued to operate until 1979, when it was also closed due to high levels of TCE. The well reopened for a short time when TCE levels declined, only to be closed again in 1982, when contamination levels increased in the groundwater. The Borough temporarily used a private water supply until an air stripper could be installed on the municipal well. Approximately 700 people depend on the Rocky Hill Municipal Well as their drinking water source.

An investigation of the Site led State officials to sample private wells in the neighboring Montgomery Township Housing Development. Results indicated widespread contamination with various VOCs. Because of the proximity and the similarity of the contaminants present, it was decided to address the Rocky Hill Municipal Well Site and the Montgomery Township Housing Development Site, also on the NPL, jointly.

Site Responsibility: This Site is being addressed through Federal actions.

NPL LISTING HISTORY

Proposed Date: 12/01/82

Final Date: 09/01/83

Threats and Contaminants



Groundwater at the Site is contaminated with VOCs. The contaminated groundwater is treated to drinking water standards before being supplied to the residents of Rocky Hill.

Cleanup Approach

The Site is being addressed in a single long-term remedial phase focusing on cleanup of the entire site.

Response Action Status



Entire Site: Following the closure of the wells, the State conducted an investigation into alternatives for groundwater cleanup. The remedy chosen for this Site in the 1988 Record of Decision includes: (1) extracting contaminated groundwater from the primary plume area; (2) treating the groundwater to Federal and State cleanup standards using an air stripper; (3) reinjecting the treated water into the underlying aquifer; (4) connecting residences still using private well water to the public water supply; (5) sealing private water supply wells that are affected; and (6) implementing a groundwater sampling program to monitor the contaminant plume and the effectiveness of the cleanup. This cleanup covers not only the Rocky Hill Municipal Well but also the Montgomery Township Housing Development. Approximately 74 affected residences in the area were connected to public water supply by 1990. The State of New Jersey began the design of the groundwater remedy in 1991. In December 1996, the Site was transferred from the State to EPA and became a Federal lead site. A potentially responsible party (PRP) had indicated an interest in implementing the remedy and EPA initiated enforcement negotiations. As a result, remedial design activities were temporarily suspended. In January 1998, EPA conducted a groundwater monitoring well sampling event at the Montgomery Township Housing Development and Rocky Hill Municipal Well Sites to assess potential changes in the groundwater contaminant plume. Approximately twenty-three (23) monitoring wells within the groundwater contaminant plume were sampled and water level measurements were taken at an additional seventeen (17) monitoring wells. The samples were analyzed for VOCs and semi-volatile organic compounds. The results of the groundwater sampling do not fully define the groundwater contaminant plume, however, they indicate that elevated levels of trichloroethylene (TCE) and several other contaminants continue to be present in site groundwater. In June 1998, EPA performed a field investigation at the Former Fifth Dimension Facility, located in the vicinity of the Rocky Hill Municipal Well. EPA installed a deep monitoring well on this property, conducted soil gas sampling, and sampled groundwater. Results of this investigation confirm that elevated levels of TCE exist within the soil and groundwater beneath this property. The complaint for cost recovery, which was initially filed in 1991, has been amended to add two parties as a result of this investigation. A PRP associated with this property also joined the enforcement negotiations. Enforcement negotiations have concluded and were not successful and cost recovery litigation is proceeding. In August 1999, EPA restarted remedial design activities. EPA is currently performing field work, including groundwater sampling, to complete the remedial design. EPA expects design activities to be complete by late fall 2003.

Cleanup Progress



The affected residences have been supplied with a safe drinking water supply, through treatment, thereby reducing the potential for residents to be exposed to contaminated groundwater at the Rocky Hill Municipal Well Site. The air stripping treatment system continues to remove contamination from impacted groundwater and will continue to operate until safe levels are achieved.

Site Repositories



Mary Jacobs Memorial Branch Library, 62 Washington Street, Rocky Hill, N.J. 08553

Montgomery Township Municipal Building, 2261 Route 206, Belle Mead, N.J. 08502